

In Which Honey Lemon Gets Her Name

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Summary: Or nickname, rather. When Honey Lemon meets Fred shortly after arriving at SFIT.

In Which Honey Lemon Gets Her Name

Isabel Rodriguez brushed a blonde piece of hair behind her ear, staring down at her lunch, a pathetic thermos of Boyardee's ravioli and a coffee mug full of fresh brewed tea.

She took her plastic spork and poked the ravioli with it. She frowned. She wasn't an expert, but she was pretty sure ravioli weren't supposed to bounce.

At least there's tea, she thought to herself, sighing and sipping the tea. It was hot, but she welcomed the warmth as it poured down her throat and into her stomach, warming her up from the inside out, like a reverse hug. The taste, however, was too sharp for Isabel's sweet personality. Reaching into her bookbag full of chemistry books, she pulled out a small container of golden, viscous liquid, which she casually poured into her mug.

_Do they have lemons here? _She thought. She looked around the SFIT cafeteria, wishing she could summon a lemon to fly to her and pour its juices into her lovely cup of tea. Alas, no winged lemons came, although a bit of ash whisked through the air and landed on her sunny cardigan, having been pushed forth by a minor explosion at a nearby lunch table.

That's what you get when you're in a prestigious tech institute, Isabel thought. _Everyone here is at least some sort of crazy. The people at that table in particular seem fond of making things explosions._

She returned to her tea, setting her elbows on the table and sipping it. It was weird, being alone like this. Isabel has always been

outgoing. Even though she didn't have a lot of friends back home (most girls her age didn't understand why Honey liked to talk about chemistry all the time, nor were they very interested), Isabel had always been a social butterfly, squealing and running around and gushing over the new chemical compound she just created to anyone who would listen. But once she had left her home in Arizona and gone all the way to San Fransokyo, seen all these amazing scientists doing amazing things with science that she'd never dreamed possible, something changed in Isabel. She became shy, withdrawn, and intimidated. Which is why she was sitting all alone at a table in the SFIT cafeteria. Geez, she'd thought she'd graduated high school, not come back to it.

She was snapped out of her reverie when a boy she had never seen before came and sat across from her at the table. He was blonde, wore casual if ill-fitting clothes, and smelled vaguely of ham. His smile, however, was a kind one.

"Hey there," he said casually. "Noticed you were sitting all by yourself over here. Then I realized I'd never met you before. And I know everybody here," he said, gesturing widely at the entire cafeteria. He extended a slender hand. "Name's Fred. Not only am I the school mascot, but I'm welcoming committee."

Isabel shook his hand. His grip was firm. "I didn't know there was a welcoming committee here," she told him.

"I'm self-appointed. Anyway, what's your name?"

"Isabel Rodriguez. Are you a student?"

He laughed. "Nah, I just hang out here. The tech they come up with here is pretty cool."

"Yeah." Isabel had to agree. SFIT was the school of her dreams. When she was just four years old, she had wanted to get her chemistry degree here. When she received the acceptance letter, she squealed and raced around her apartment like fifty times until her dad caught her by the shoulders and told her to calm down or she'd give the old woman downstairs a heart attack.

"What's your major?" Fred asked.

"Uh, chemistry." Isabel said.

Fred's eyes widened. "Chem? Seriously? That's so rad!" He reached into his back pocket and produced a rolled-up, slightly stained comic book issue. He held it up for her to see. "Could you, like, mix up some sort of potion that could let me turn into a fierce, crime-fighting monster at will?"

Isabel laughed, waving the paper aside. "Sorry, but that's not science."

Fred deflated, pouting. "Fine. Be that way."

Isabel reached out to him. "No, no, I just meant--"

Fred was distracted by something else before she could finish. "Ooh, what's this?" He grabbed her mug and took a sip, then smiled. "Mm."

Honey."

"Yeah." Isabel pushed the mug towards him. "You can have the rest of it if you want. I like it better with honey and lemon."

"Thanks!" Fred grabbed the mug and gulped it down, sighing, satisfied. "What's in there, anyway?"

"Tea."

"Tea? Isn't that like, grasswater?"

She blinked. "No."

"No, but see, you put some grass in some boiling water and you get tea, right? That's how it works," Fred grinned. "So it's grasswater."

"It's jasmine tea," Isabel countered good-naturedly. "It's made from leaves and flowers."

"Fine. Plantwater."

"That makes it sound yucky," Isabel made a face. "But I guess you could call it that if you want."

Fred grinned wider. "You know what, since you like honey and lemon in your plantwater so much, I'm going to call you Honey Lemon. That cool?"

"Honey Lemon?" Isabel considered it. "It's...unusual." But not all that bad. It sounded kind of cute, actually. Isabel liked cute things.

"I now declare thee to be called Honey Lemon, and only Honey Lemon, by he who is called Fred the Great and Awesome," Fred said solemnly, placing a hand on Isabel's head. She bowed, playing along.

"Do you always give people nicknames?" Isa-Honey Lemon asked Fred.

Fred nodded. "Yeah. Like Dyn-o-mite over there," he said, pointing to one of the kids at the explosion table, "And Waffle Iron, and Letterhead, and Oopa-Doopa." He pointed out each person as he listed off their nicknames. "Oh, and Gogo, and Wasabi, over there with Tadashi. See them over there?" He pointed across the cafeteria to a rebellious-looking Korean girl blowing bubbles with her gum, leaning casually on the shoulder of a muscular but friendly-looking black guy who was laughing with an equally friendly-looking Japanese guy. Actually, the Japanese boy was kind of cute, Honey had to admit. "I like pretty much everyone here, but they're probably the coolest. Hey!" He seemed to think of something. "You should totally come and meet them. Come on!"

Fred shot up from his seat and raced over to the other side of the cafeteria with all the speed of a roadrunner and all the grace of a rabid elephant.

Honey Lemon hesitated. _Should I?_

Fred had already reached the others' lunch table. She heard his voice ring out even above the cafeteria chatter. "Guys, I need you to meet my new friend Honey Lemon. She's pretty cool, even though she can't make a formula that will turn me into a monster and she drinks plantwater."

"Plantwater?" the rebellious girl piped up. "It's called tea, genius."

"She new?" Asked the black man in the green sweater.

"I dunno. I didn't ask. She's a chem student though."

"Chem? Sweet! I need a chemie's advice for my new project," the cutie patootie Japanese boy said.

"Where is this girl? How do we know she's not another imaginary friend?" The girl asked.

"Cliffton is not imaginary! And Honey Lemon's right here, see?"

That's my cue, Honey Lemon thought, smiling. Taking a deep breath, she gathered her things into her slender arms and ran over to a table of new friends.

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><p>AN: Hopefully you guys enjoyed this little fic (it's amazing what ideas pop into your head when you watch BH6 while sick and sprawled on the couch)! Leave a review if you like...I would love to hear what you thought!

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